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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An imageable composition comprising:
an acid curable composition;

A1
an acid generator;

an infrared absorber; and optionally a colorant; wherein at least one of said infrared absorber and said colorant has a counter anion derived from a strong, non-volatile acid having a pKa of not more than about 8.

2. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said acid curable composition comprises:

a binder; and

a crosslinking agent for said binder.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

A2
3 ~~5~~ (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 4, 2, wherein said ~~polymer~~ binder is selected from the group consisting of: a polyol, a polyether polyol, a novolak resin, a resole resin, a ~~hydroxyfunctional~~ an acrylic resin, a ~~hydroxyfunctional~~ polyester resin, an amino resin, an amido resin and combinations thereof.

6. (Cancelled)

A3
4 ~~7~~ (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 2, wherein said crosslinking agent is selected from the group consisting of: a resole resin, an amino resin, an amido resin, an epoxy compound having at least two epoxide groups and a combination thereof.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

A4
5 ~~14~~ (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 1, wherein said acid generator is an ultraviolet, visible, ~~or infrared radiation~~ or heat activated compound.

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15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

A5 18. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 16, wherein said ~~onium acid~~ salt generator is selected from the group consisting of: an iodonium salt, a sulfonium salt, a hydrocarbyloxysulfonium salt, a hydrocarbyloxyammonium salt, an aryl diazonium salt and a combinations thereof.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein said acid has a pKa of not more than about 4.

A6 28. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 27, wherein said strong nonvolatile acid is a sulfonic acid represented by the formula:



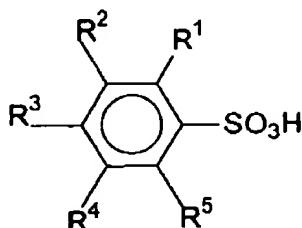
wherein R is selected from the group consisting of: a substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl of 1 to 22 carbon atoms, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl of 6 to 22 carbon atoms and a mixture thereof.

29. (Cancelled)

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(Currently Amended) The composition of claim ~~28~~⁸, wherein said sulfonic acid is an aryl sulfonic acid represented by the formula:

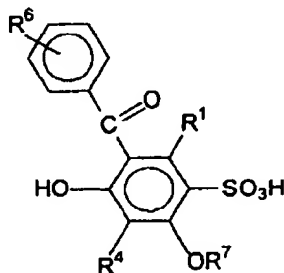


wherein each of R¹, R², R³, R⁴ and R⁵ is independently selected from the group consisting of: hydrogen, alkyl of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, haloalkyl of 1 to 22 carbon atoms having at least one halogen, aryl of 6 to 12 carbon atoms, halogen, hydroxy, alkoxy, cyano, nitro, alkoxycarbonyl and acyl.

~~31~~ (Cancelled)

1032

(Currently Amended) The composition of claim ~~30, 28~~⁸, wherein said aryl sulfonic acid is represented by the formula:



wherein each of R¹, R⁴ and R⁶ is independently selected from the group consisting of: hydrogen, alkyl of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, haloalkyl of 1 to 12 carbon atoms having at least one halogen, aryl of 6 to 12 carbon atoms, halogen, hydroxy, alkoxy, cyano, nitro, alkoxycarbonyl and acyl and wherein R⁷ is selected from the group consisting of: hydrogen, alkyl of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, haloalkyl of 1 to 12 carbon atoms having at least one halogen, aryl of 6 to 12 carbon atoms, alkoxycarbonyl and acyl.

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(Original) The composition of claim 32, wherein said aryl sulfonic acid is 3-benzoyl-4-hydroxy-6-methoxybenzenesulfonic acid.

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34. (Original) The composition of claim 1, further comprising a photothermal converter material.

^{a⁹} 13 35. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 1, wherein said counter anion of said infrared absorber comprises a ~~is the~~ conjugate base of a non-volatile acid.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Cancelled)

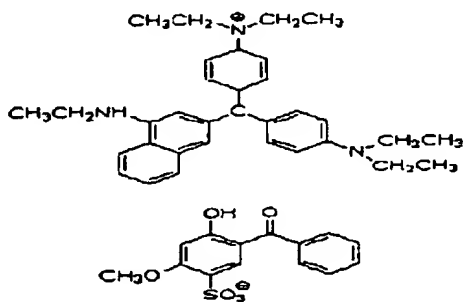
^{a¹⁰} 14 38. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 1, wherein said infrared absorber is selected from the group consisting of: a pigment, a dye and combinations 30 thereof.

39. (Cancelled)

^{a¹¹} 15 40. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 38, 1, wherein said infrared absorber is a dye selected from the group consisting of: cyanine dyes, squarylium dyes, pyrylium salts and nickel thiolate complexes.

41. (Cancelled)

^{a¹²} 16 42. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 1, ~~wherein said colorant dye~~ is further comprising a blue colorant dye represented by the formula:



^{a¹²} 17 43. (Currently Amended) An imageable element comprising:
a substrate; and
an imageable composition coated on a surface of said substrate, said imageable composition comprising: an acid curable composition; an acid generator; an infrared absorber and ~~optionally, a colorant, wherein at least one of said infrared absorber and said~~

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a12 ~~colorant has a counter anion derived from a strong non-volatile acid, having a pKa of not more than about 8.~~

44. (Cancelled)

18 45. (Currently Amended) A method of producing an imaged element comprising the steps of:

a13 providing an imageable element comprising a substrate and an imageable composition coated on a surface of said substrate, said composition comprising an acid curable composition, an acid generator, an infrared absorber and optionally, a colorant, wherein at least one of said infrared absorber and said colorant has a counter anion derived from a strong, non-volatile acid, having a pKa of not more than about 8;

imagewise exposing said imageable element to radiation to produce an imagewise exposed element having exposed and unexposed regions;

baking said imagewise exposed element at a temperature and period of time sufficient to produce a cured element; and

contacting said cured element and a developer to remove the unexposed regions and thereby produce said imaged element.

46. (Original) The method of claim 45, wherein said exposing step is carried out using an infrared laser.